(128)

Charleston 1919

March

My Billy.

Of course the relief I have Nelly here is incredible. I can't pretend it isn't. I think can't believe I need not jump up in 2 minutes & do some washing or mending but I shall now. Let her & complete laziness. I never thought for a moment however that you could let her come for 3 weeks. In fact I didn't know Duncan was writing to ask for her at all. & he himself didn't ever expect her to come for more than a week at the outside.

& then only if you would
come too. But your
telegram was irresistible.
If you have really got
Lil now for 3 weeks I
suppose Nelly may stay
that time. But don't be
afraid I shall try to keep
her longer. As a matter
of fact I have I hope
got a nurse coming in just
that time. She sounds
good & I have written
today engaging her definitely
I rather think of coming
to London myself then &
if I do I shall bring
Nelly & the baby & get
the nurse to come to
Gordon Sq. But I'll let you
know about that later.
Meanwhile do come here

yourself if you can. You would have the great pleasure of seeing me for hours at a time & you know quite still get several nights to take. If me in the capacity of mother of a daughter. It's quite different from being mother of 2 sons.

She, by the way, is registered & named now I think you'll approve as you suggested both names. Vanessa Helen. Won't Rogers be touched? Stephen may be added later but I'm rather inclined to think it would be superfluous. I expect I shall generally call her Nell - or I could. Of course call her Nessa without confusion.

I am sending you a cheque but I expect I really owe you a great deal more. Please let me know if I do. Nelly tells me you sent all kinds of luxuries - I haven't had time to see them yet but its very wicked of you.

Please write & tell me how you are getting on.

Yours VB.

I am ordering some letter from my private source of supply & we sent to you but I don't know if they'll have arrived.

Account rendered £3. 2. 6.

~~Nelly's journey~~
Lil for 3 weeks 2. 5. 0

£5. 7. 6

T. PARSONS 3-2-77

(129)

3 April 1919

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Thursday.

My Billy.

Thanks for the advertisement but I cant think that the Ns family coachman from Orchard Leigh would ever do as gardener at Charleston or want less than £100 a year. I am rather hopeless & petty cash one now No one has appeared yet or answered & I see I cant get it arranged before I go back. Mrs Hammond I believe wants to leave on Friday - so unless I have got someone - either a married couple or a h. parlourmaid. by then I think I must simply bring the children to the flat, dismiss La B. for a month, & try to get servants at greater leisure. Could you possibly let Nelly stay till Friday? I'd bring her up with me & it would let me have time to pack etc at Charleston & generally prepare for a month in London. I dont see really

what else I'm to do unless by a miracle I can get servants first. In London I should have Jenny as cook & possibly Mabel as nurse. So I could really leave time to get other servants. But I must think I can face another week of this hopeless rush to agencies, telephoning & letter writing. I'd rather do anything else & I hope it won't do the baby harm if I'm very careful.

Please tell me if it's difficult to let Nelly stay as long. I'll tell you if by any chance anyone else turns up or what happens.

I wish you were coming to the party tonight

Yours VB

(130)

Charleston 6 April 1919

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Sunday

My Billy -

What a to do. I think its all right now but (as I daresay you know) what happened was this Lil wrote to Nelly at once after seeing me & said you were asking her to stay in another week she seem to have hinted it might be even longer. Nelly got this letter before I returned on Saturday. was furious at your not being asked has it fixed to be willing to stay. wrote a very angry letter to Lil in pencil - asked Jenny to copy it out in ink & post it in London (Jenny was going up for a workers wedding) & so that was how it all happened. I found Nelly in a very nervous & rather hysterical state saying she was sure you wanted to get rid of her

I was homesick she was for Lottie. I calmed her down by explaining that you only headed written because you thought I'd see her as soon as a letter could reach her. I now your letter has come & she's had a rest from Mrs Simm & she's quite cheerful again.

Thank you very much for the telegram. I wrote at once to the Scotch girl. She sounds to me rather expensive but you don't say how old she is. I have also heard of two other nurses through an Ipswich agency. One of whom sounds good. So I have written to all. Of course you have seen the Scotch girl is an advantage but I can't give all my servants wages on that basis which I might have to do - Still if she's really good it might be worth while. & if she's not so young that Jenny would at once want to be raised too. I hope to hear details from you tomorrow - I suppose after all one ought to consider the extra wages too much if she's really

(130 ii)

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

very good. but I see that with a
gardener & wife who seem necessary
if one is ever to exist here at all /
in future my establishment may
soon bankrupt me -

I may have to come up this
week or on Monday with the
children if I can't get a married
couple first. I will let you know
what happens.

Adrien & Karin came to tea
yesterday. Lipper & Snider than
ever. My word. Bright yellow
blue, red. you can't conceive it.
Karin took your bicycle back
which I thought you'd be glad of.

Bunny is here & a female cousin
of his. a perennial gardener who
sets the garden into order. She's
rather nice. A typical modern young
woman rather like a more intelligent
Barbara. & rather like Trilby to
look at. They are practical, the

modern young women & completely
independent. It's really a great merit.
In fact I like them much better
than Mey & Jansen & Co. Trousers
short hair & red cheeks are anyhow
more attractive than pale languor
with a soupçon of poetry, don't you
think so? I fear that the Garnetts
Garnett thing may have ambitions
in that line too which would spoil
her. My household as usual
is full of interest. You really
ought to come & live in it
for a time.

Yours
V B.

Nelly says she will come to London
with me on Friday if I like & come
to you on Saturday. Would that be
all right? If I don't so to London
she can come whenever you &
she like it. But if I do so it
would be a great help if she
stay & come with us. Please let me
know if you can arrange this easily
If not she can come on Tuesday or when you
want her.

(131)

Charleston 1919

May 13

My Baby.

I wrote in such a hurry yesterday I quite forgot to show you up for bombarding us with food as usual. Such cakes. such bread. really we're outstanding & you must fill our mouths in this way. It's all very well to have all the luxuries of Richmond at your command. but ducks' eggs abound here. & soft vegetables & fruit with us. Little Wolfe is here now. & I believe

Osbert Sitwell is coming on Friday & then the whole troupe of summer visitors no doubt. I am rather alarmed at the prospect of the Captain as I fear he won't get such late dinners as he's accustomed to.

When do you come? Perhaps you will be here in time to entertain him. I hope so.

I am painting again quite steadily. It's wonderful. I am really better than I've ever been here as after 9.30 in the morning I have done with my household for the day

In Trissie's day, there were always interruptions at half hour intervals all day. But the Pilchers thank goodness can be left to themselves in the old fashioned style.

Of course you are away at the wrong time for we do think Richmond is wonderful but you should see our tulips & apple blossom & the downs. Angelica is so grown & tall - you'd hardly know her & most intelligent too. We have talked to Mabel about letters. I don't know if I shall but I shall be back for some time I think so I

shall see.

I hear Alwin & Karin are now in trouble, see the Halseys. Please send me gossip about them & Nancy & Elena or anyone in fact. & do some concerts for my benefit. I hear London is simply full of excitements & I hope you're collecting some for me

Love VB.

(132)

Summer 1921
June

50, GORDON SQUARE,

W.C.1.

Thursday.

My Billy

Leonard told me I was to write to you. Its unfortunate for you you haven't got a literary sister now. Its not the greatest difficulty as you know that I take to the pen. I shall telephone today to find out how you are. I hope you aren't too much bored. But perhaps its very nice staying in your hole meditating. It can't be so boring at any rate as is dining with Mr Taylor

as I did last night. That is the worst of the poor man - he is harmless. There is no danger of his shooting me - but an incredible bore. However it was for the last time - on Saturday he goes abroad. I have had an interview with his old friend Mr Powys who has promised to prevent his going to St Tropez. So I hope never to see him again.

Will you come & stay at St Tropez? You will really have to. All the school

matters. Mr Chalmers & Miss Paul are again doing their best to prevent me from talking the children abroad. But I mean to defy them if I can – unless I find it will really prevent Julian getting in to his next school. & even then I shall take Quentin I think. There is a very good hotel at St Tropez. & it is a lovely place with a small harbour looking over a great bay. & you must be able to resist coming there I hope. If you do I shall think you lead a dull life. So that must be your

autumn plan. I had a visit from Snow yesterday. in London till Friday with her old friend Miss Kilson. She was full of some enterprising bookseller at Leeds who will advertise your publications. But she was going to write to Leonard about him. She was the same as ever. I insisted upon my going to the Royal Academy with her which also was the same as ever with Henry's terribly bad picture in the middle. I have noticed one peculiarity about the quiet provincial ladies when they come to town. They wear dresses in the best of taste. a ladylike navy blue made with little tucks & insertions & hanging most gracefully & irreproachably.

T. PARSONS 3.2.73